From: David Santin
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 8:37pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom This May Concern -

  My name is David Santin. I am a sophomore Computer Science major at
Rutgers University, and have been compelled to participate in the public
response to the Microsoft/Department of Justice antitrust settlement
because I see it failing in its intended purpose. An antitrust settlement
should be designed to censure a corporation for its anticompetitive
actions while preventing those actions from occurring in the future. I
believe that the settlement, as it stands, fulfills neither of those
points satisfactorily.

  As a future programmer and IT specialist, the stranglehold that
Microsoft exerts on the computer industry as a whole is frightening. It
is currently unfeasable for a corporation to market an operating system to
directly compete with Microsoft's Windows line of operating systems. The
closest competitors, Apple Computer and the open-source Linux operating
systems, are still a miniscule fraction of the share Microsoft
commands. The issue is that Microsoft has been allowed to crush
competition repeatedly during its history, and has taken every advantage
to do so. But if Microsoft made a superior product, then possibly an
argument could be made for allowing this antitrust settlement to
stand. But the simple fact is that Microsoft's operating system has many
deep-seated flaws contained within, the most telling and dangerous of
which is its utter lack of security.

  Almost every week an advisory is released which documents a flaw or
security weakness in a Microsoft-related product. Microsoft's operating
system market share has increased in the past few years, but
correspondingly, so have the amount of virii and security bulletins. Is
this a coincidence? Not at all. Microsoft's complete and total disregard
for safeguarding its users has been shown time and time again. The most
frightening part about this is that Microsoft, if allowed to continually
strangle the computer industry, will control more and more computers, but
make them less secure in the process. Even the US government has been
advised not to use Microsoft's operating system, because of its inherent
security weaknesses. I believe that only a full disclosure of ALL
software APIs will make Windows a more secure operating system. Microsoft
has shown time and time again that, if left to their own devices, they do
not care about security.

  Sirs and madams, I hope you see how deleterious Microsoft has been to
computer security and competition, and how this can only get worse in the
future. I urge you to reject this settlement for one which forces
Microsoft to both loosen its grip on the computer industry and make its

flagship product, Windows, more secure. Anything less will expose this country to far worse security problems than we have seen to date. Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

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